ARTICLES
OF
INQUIRY
Concerning MATTERS
ECCLESIASTICAL;

EXHIBITED
To the Miniſters, Church-Wardens, and Side-men of every Pariſh within the Dioceſs of
LICHFIELD and *COVENTRY*;
IN THE
Triennial VISITATION
OF THE
Right Reverend Father in God
JOHN
By Divine Providence
Lord Biſhop of *LICHFIELD* and *COVENTRY*,
In the fourth year of his Conſecration, *An. Dom.* 1665.

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The Oath to be given unto the Church-wardens, and Side-men, of every Pariſh.

YOu ſhall Swear to enquire with the beſt diligence that you may, and preſent every perſon of your Pariſh that hath done any Offence contrary to the Eccleſiaſtical Laws of this Kingdom now in force, or omitted any Duty therein required. And this you ſhall do, without any favour, or hatred, or fear of Diſpleaſure; *So help you God, and the contents of his holy Goſpel.*

ARTICLES OF INQUIRY

Within the

DIOCESS of *LICHFIELD* and *COVENTRY.*

Inquiries about the Church and Church-yard.

I. IS your Parish-Church and Chancel decently kept for Gods Honour? Are the Roofs, Walls, Pavements, and Windows well repaired? are the Ten Commandments, Lords Prayer, and the Creed, drawn out in fair Letters, in convenient places? and are the Kings Arms set up?

II. HAVE your late Church-wardens made Leavies for the reparation of the Church, and other holy uses? And are there any that refuse to pay the proportion leavied upon them?

III. IS there a Font of Stone decently covered, standing towards the lower end of the Church, for the Administration

ſtration of Baptiſm? Is there a comely Table placed conveniently in Church or Chapell for the uſe of the Lords Supper? Is there a comely Carpet of Silk or good Stuff for that holy Table, with a fair Linnen Cloth to ſpread upon it in the time of Adminiſtration? And is there an handſome Cup of ſilver for the Wine, and a Cover of ſilver to the ſame to put the Bread on? And is there one or more Flaggons of Pewter or better metall for that uſe?

IV. ARE your reading Desk and Pulpit conveniently ſet up, and placed, for the uſe of publick Prayer and Sermons? And hath your Pulpit a Cuſhion, and comely covering before it?

V. IS there in your Church the Common-Prayer-Book of the largeſt Volume, ſet forth by Authority of this preſent Parliament? And is there the Bible in Folio, fairly bound, of King James's Tranſlation? Is there a decent Surplice, (one or more) for your Parſon, Vicar, Curate, or Lecturer, to wear in the time of all publick Miniſtrations?

VI. ARE the Tombs, Monuments, Gravеſtones of the Dead in your Church, or Church-yard, preſerved, and not ſuffered to be broken, taken down, or removed?

VII. IS there a Book of Parchment, wherein be Regiſtred the Chriſtnings, Marriages, and Burials in your Pariſh? Is there a ſtrong Cheſt, with three Locks, wherein to preſerve your Church Furniture? and a Box for Alms, placed in a fit place for the Relief of the Poor?

VIII. IS the Houſe and Out-houſes of your Miniſter in good and ſufficient repair? Doth he preſerve the Gardens, Orchards, and Glebe belonging to him, and the Trees growing in the ſaid places, without embezeling, changing, or any way damnifying them?

IX. Is

IX. IS the Church-yard decently kept, and well fenced to keep out Beasts?

Inquiries about the Parson, Vicar, Curate, Lecturer.

I. HAVE the above-named received Episcopall Ordination, according to the Laws of the Kingdom?

II. CAN you tell who did present your Parson, or Vicar, to his Benefice? Have you heard, or known, that he came in Simoniacally? Was he inducted into his Benefice before sufficient witnes? And did he read the nine and thirty Articles before or at Morning or Evening prayer? And did he give his consent to them?

III. HATH he read the Book of Common prayer as it is injoyned by the late Act of Uniformity for publick Prayer, Administration of the Sacraments, &c. on some Sunday before the four and twentieth of August, Anno. 1662. And by the additional Act for such as were disabled before the Feast of the nativity of our Lord, Anno. 1663. and did, and doth he wear the Surplice while he perform'd that Office, and other Offices mentioned in that Common-Prayer-Book?

IV. HATH he publish'd his consent unto the said Book on some Sunday before the time above-mentioned, openly in time of Divine Service, and hath he subscribed to the Declaration as it is exprest in the 77. page of the above-named Statute, and manifested it to the Congregation openly?

V. DOTH he read the full Service, according to the direction of the Common-prayer-book, on every Sunday and Holy-day, at Morning and Evening Prayer? or doth he negligently omit any part of it?

VI. DOTH

VI. DOTH he Preach a Sermon on every Sunday, or procure a Sermon then to be Preach'd? Or else sometimes read one of the Homilies which the Church hath appointed? And doth he often on Sundays and Holy-dayes before Divine Service, instruct his Parishioners in the Catechism in the Church?

VII. DOTH he read the Service appointed for the fifth of November, thirtieth of January, twenty ninth of May? and doth he keep the yearly Perambulation and Rogation dates before or at the Feast of our Lords Ascension?

VIII. IF your Parson or Vicar keep a Curate, is he of godly Life and sufficient Learning? Is he allowed by the Bishop, and can you tell whether the said Curate have a competent allowance according to the value of the Living?

IX. DOTH your Parish maintain a Lecturer? Is he a Vertuous and Orthodox Divine? Is he Licensed by the Bishop? Doth he read the full Divine Service of Common Prayer once a Moneth at the least, wearing a Surplice?

X. HAVE you a Parson, Vicar, or Curat in your Parish, or Hamlet? if not, how long have you been without one? and who is the Patron that should present one to the Ordinary?

XI. DO you observe, to your best understanding, that your Parson, Vicar, Lecturer, or Curate, do Preach the true Word of God? Or do they, to your judgment, (having consulted with other grave Parishioners,) vent dangerous Opinions, derogating to the Glory of God, and a pious Life? Do they teach Sedition directly against his Majesty, his Laws, and Government, or do you note, that indirectly they cast out Seditious glances against the Civil State, or Government Ecclesiastical?

XII. DOTH

XII. DOTH your Minister celebrate the Lords Supper in the Church, according to the Service of the Common-Prayer-Book, often every year? Doth he repulse them from it that are scandalous by the sentence of the Laws? Doth he Baptize such Infants of his Parish, according to the Service of the Common-Prayer, as upon warning given before, are brought on Sundaies or Holydaies to the Church with Godfathers and God-mothers, and upon lawful Summons doth he Baptize Infants at home in case of danger and necessity?

XIII. DOTH he visit the Sick at their houses, when he is required, upon lawful Summons? Doth he Pray with them, Exhort them to faith and repentance, and comfort them? Doth he give them the Holy Communion, that profess faith in Christ, and sorrow for their sins, if they require it; and doth he Exhort them to Brotherly love, and works of Charity, if they be able to bequeath a portion to pious uses?

XIV. DOTH he prepare the young men and Maidens of the Parish to be confirmed by the Bishop? Doth he Marry any clandestinely, and at due hours in the Church, and that upon Banes thrice publish'd on Sundaies or Holydaies, or Licence obtained from the Spiritual Court? And doth he bury the Dead according to the Book of Common-Prayer?

XV. IS your Minister, Lecturer, Curate, a man of sober, chast, just, unblameable Life? and spare not to present him, or them, that are not every way examples of Godliness.

XVI. DOTH your Minister with the Church-wardens take care duely every-year, to send in the names of all such in his Parish, as have been Baptized, Married, Buried, Excommunicated, that they may be enrolled in the Bishops Registry?

XVII. DOTH

XVII. DOTH your Minister maintain peace with his Neighbours? and study to keep them in peace as much as in him lies? Doth he take diligent care to reduce all Sectaries, Separatists, and Refractory persons to the obedience of the Doctrine and Government of this Church? And doth he offer himself, being an able Learned man, to confer with Popish Recusants to convert them, and to bring them into the bosom of this Church?

Inquiries about the Parishioners.

I. DO all your Parishioners of due Age resort to the Divine Service and Sermons in your Church on Sundays and Holy-days? and on Wednesday and Friday mornings, if conveniently they can?

II. DO they or any of their servants occupy themselves in bodily Labours on Sundays or Holy-days? do they open their Shops and sell Wares on those dates? or do Vintners Victuallers, Inn-keepers, or others, receive any into their Houses to tipple and waste time idly on those dates? only they may receive Travellers that are upon a Journey in necessary occasions.

III. DO your Parishioners in the time of Divine Service, Sermon, or Homily, behave themselves reverently? Men and Youths with their Hats off, both Sexes giving due attention, none disturbing holy Duties, by talking, walking removing, going out, or using any other offence? and do they all kneel, stand up, make answers in time of Divine Service, as you find it appointed in the Rubricks of the Common-Prayer-Book?

IV. SUCH as may be discerned to be Papists, Hereticks, Schismaticks, Anabaptists, Separatists, Quakers & the like, are not only to be presented, but twelve pence is to

be leavied on every such person, and so many of them for every Sunday as absent themselves from the Church, and to be employed to the maintenance of the Poor, whereof account is to be made to the Justices of the Peace.

V. SUCH are to be presented as are known or much suspected to be Incestuous, or to be Married in Incestuous or unlawfull degrees of Blood; likewise you ought to present known Adulterers, Fornicators, Blasphemers, common Swearers, Drunkards, Sorcerers, or Resorters to Sorcerers.

VI. ARE there any above the Age of sixteen years in your Parish, and especially that have been examined by your Minister in the Catechism before, that do not come to the Lords Supper, to partake it reverently upon their knees three times every year at the least, the Feast of Easter, or the time thereabout, being one?

VII. ARE there any in your Parish that keep their Children unbaptized? enquire diligently, and return the Parents or Governors names, and the list of those Children by such names as you can learn. And are there any that cause their Children to be baptized privately, by any whom your Minister doth not allow, and whose name they will not declare, nor bring those Children, baptized in that private sort to the Church in time of publick Service, that their baptism may be known to the Congregation that it was compleat and lawfull?

VIII. DO all Women that have been safely delivered come to the Church in due time to partake of the Common-Prayer, and do such Women pay their accustomed Duties?

IX. DO your Parishioners bring their Dead to be decently Buried after the Service of the Church in their own Parish grounds? or if they carry the Dead away to be Buried in some other place, whether they be Lodgers or other

Strangers, do they first obtain leave of the Minister of the Parish, and have his certificate?

X. DO any of your Parish usually frequent other Parish Churches, and absent themselves from their own?

XI. ARE there any that keep private Conventicles contrary to the Statute of this present Parliament in their Houses, or abroad, which are resorted to, by those especially that are known or suspected for Sectaries, or any way disaffected to the present Church of England?

XII. DO your Parishioners pay their Easter Offerings, and accustomed Duties, called Vicarage Tithes, or by any other name, to their Minister?

XIII. ARE there any Wills or Testaments of persons dead in your Parish, that are not proved by a lawfull Judge? or do you know or hear of any goods administred without due grant from the Ordinary?

XIV. WHAT Legacies have been given to pious uses in your Parish, which are utterly defrauded or not imployed to the right use according to the Will of the Donor?

XV. ARE your Seats and Pews in the Church decently kept? And are the Parishioners placed in them without offence and contention?

Inquiries about Church-Officers, and other Persons.

I. IF any Stranger come to Preach in your Parish Church or Chapel, on Sundays and Holy-days, at Christnings, Funerals, Marriages, or any other occasion, let the Churchwardens demand to see his Orders and Licence to preach which he had from the Bishop; and if he can shew none, let

let them inhibit him from Preaching.

II. DID your late Church-wardens suffer excommunicated Persons to be Buried in any part of your Church, Chancel, or Church-yard?

III. DOTH your Parish Clark, and Sexton (if you have any such) do their Duties obediently and diligently? Are they of honest Life and Conversation? Is your Parish Clark duely chosen by the Minister? And is he allowed by the Ordinary? Can he write and read? Doth he make Responsions to the Hymns and other Suffrages to the Liturgy?

IV. IS there a School publick or private in your Parish? Is the School-Master, (and Usher if he have one) allowed by the Bishop or his Chancellour? Doth he breed his Scholars Religiously? and doth he teach them the Church Catechism? Is there any who pretend to be a Minister, and is a Non-conformist, who doth keep a School for young Scholars in his house in the name of some other person?

V. HAVE you any Physician, Chirurgion, or Widwife in your Parish, that practise without Licence?

VI. ARE your Church-wardens duely chosen in the week after Easter day, and after the custom and manner of the Parish?

VII. HAVE your late Church-wardens, having surrender'd their places upon the Election of new ones, given up their accounts to the Parishioners? and are their accounts allowed? or have they falsified their trust? wherein? and how much?

VIII. ALSO have the said Church-wardens been diligent to repair the Church, to keep it decent and comely?

Have

Have they preserved the Font for Baptism fit and handsome for that use? likewise have they look'd carefully to the Communion Table, to the Plate, and all Utensils pertaining to it? And have they provided such fine white Bread and good Wine, as was fit for the Sacrament, according to advice taken with the Minister?

LEt the Church-wardens and Side-men inquire Diligently what Answers they will and can give, according to the Ecclesiastical Laws now established, to all these particulars upon Oath, setting the fear of God and the good of his Church before their Eyes.

FINIS.

Kinsar